

BGI Alert

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Communication Commission Targets Critical Media

According to recent reports, the Georgian National Communications Commission (“**ComCom**”) has been monitoring television programs and identifying statements that it believes violate applicable legal framework. As a result, ComCom has issued written warnings and imposed administrative fines on broadcasters.

Under the Law on Broadcasting, ComCom has the right to fine a broadcasting company or video-sharing platform provider for up to 0.5% of annual income for a violation. For repeat violations within one year or a continued breach, the fine increases up to 3% (a minimum of GEL 10,000). Suspension of a license/authorization may also be initiated.

ComCom relies on the Law on Broadcasting, which prohibits broadcasters from covering, in news or social-political programs, information reflecting political or other confrontations or current public policy issues based on the broadcaster’s subjective attitude or opinion. The law also prohibits broadcasters from expressing views in support of or opposition to any political party, social or religious association, or other interest group.

Introduced in May 2025, the respective provision of the law is broadly worded and, according to observers and media specialists, creates risks of media censorship. This fear was partially materialized, now that ComCom has identified inter alia the following expressions as violations of law: “Ivanishvili’s party”, “judicial clan”, “political prisoners”, “GD regime”, “the so-called education reform”, and “GD violent policies”, and issued monetary fines to enforce the law.

Notably, Article 17 of Georgia’s Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, prohibits persecution on the basis of a person’s opinions, and protects individual’s right to freely receive and disseminate information. It further establishes that the mass media shall be free and that censorship is inadmissible. Monopolizing the media or the means of disseminating information is prohibited.

Against this constitutional backdrop, ComCom’s interpretation and application of the 2025 amendments to the Law on Broadcasting poses a threat to freedom of speech and expression, potentially restricting critical reporting. These developments are particularly troubling when viewed alongside reports of dozens of individuals being imprisoned for their social media posts. The implications of these practices resonate beyond the media sector and have a potential to negatively affect Georgia’s investment climate and the broader business environment.

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For questions or inquiries please contact:

Sandro Bibilashvili, Partner

sandro.bibilashvili@bgi.ge

Luka Kodua, Associate

luka.kodua@bgi.ge

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